

THE  
Surest Way of Prospering  
IN OUR 3,  
MILITARY AFFAIRS

The Ensuing  
CAMPAIGNS,

And therereby of putting a Speedy Conclusion  
TO THE  
Expensive and Bloody War  
Which at present we are Involv'd in.

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For the USE of all  
Her MAJESTIES Subjects,  
Especially those in Her ARMIES.

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By *JOHN EDWARDS*, D.D.

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## P S A L M LX. 12.

*Through God we shall do valiantly : For he it is that shall tread down our Enemies.*

**I**F you peruse this Psalm, you will find it to be composed of Mournful Complaints, of Humble Prayers, and of Joyful Exultations. First, the Pious King complains that God had cast him and his people off, and had scatter'd them, and was displeased with them, that is, that God had suffer'd them to be defeated by their Enemies in Battle ; for you may observe in the 10th Verse, that *casting off* is Explain'd by *not going out with their Armies*. God was pleas'd to deny them success in their Martial Enterprizes, and to let them turn their backs upon their Enemies. Which after the Psalmist had lamented, he took Courage, by Faith foreseeing that Success and Victory should attend his Forces for the future. *Thou hast given a Banner, even a Triumphal one, saith he, to them that fear thee, v. 4.* Wherefore he humbly Implores this Mercy which his Faith had discover'd, he prays that they may *be delivered, and saved with God's right hand, v. 5.* That when they go forth against their Enemies, they may be rescued from their fury, and return Victorious.

And now he Comforts and Encourages himself in the Promises of GOD, God, (saith he) *hath spoken in his holiness, I will therefore rejoice, v. 6.* And accordingly he breaks forth into these Joyful Ovations, *I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth.* By which places Samaria is meant, and his dividing and meting them signify his Dominion over them. *Gilead is mine, saith he, and Manasseh is mine, Ephraim also is the strength of my head, Judah is my Lawgiver, v. 7.* Gilead, Manasseh and Ephraim denote the Kingdom of Israel : These are the strength of his head, that is, his Chief strength and defence in time of War. And then Judah is added, which signifies the Kingdom of Judah : He calls it his Lawgiver with reference to the Prophecy of the Scepter and Lawgiver not departing from Judah, denoting that to be the Royal Tribe. Now, David being possess'd of these, and being safe at home, he proceeds to reckon up his Conquests abroad, *Moab is my wash-*

*pot*, v. 8. That is, the People of Moab are subject to me; for to pour Water out of a Vessel for the washing of an others Hands is the same as to be his *Servant*, 2 Kings 3. 11. *Over Edom will I cast out my Shoe*, That is, I will take possession of the Territories of the *Edomites*, and make them Tributary to me; for loosing or plucking off the Shooe was a \* Ceremony used of old in Contracts and making over Estates: So here it is used to signify the Transferring the right and possession of this Country to *David*, and consequently it is an Emblem of Subjugating and Enslaving that People. *Philistia, Triumph thou because of me*, or over me, if thou canst, for I conceive 'tis Elegantly here spoken in a Sarcastick and Ironick way. *Who will bring me into the strong City? Who will lead me into Edom? Wilt not thou, O God?* v. 9, 10. Yea, thou certainly wilt give me, the dominion over the *Edomites*, and over all their Cities which seem'd to be Impregnable. After he had thus and in other the like Words encourag'd himself in GOD, he craves the Divine help and aid, without which all Humane Power and Force avail nothing, *Give us help from trouble, for vain is the help of Man*, v. 11. And then in the Words of my Text, he testifies his Trust and Reliance on GOD, and frankly acknowledges that He alone can enable us to defeat and vanquish our Enemies whomever we go out in Battle against them: He only is the Disposer and Giver of Victory: He only can direct us into the sure way of obtaining it. *Through God we shall do valiantly: For he it is that shall tread down our Enemies.*

From which Words I will offer this seasonable Observation, That it is the Presence and Assistance of GOD alone that can make our Armies prosper. Or thus, Unless GOD vouchsafes to bless our Forces by Land and Sea, we shall not be able to do valiantly, and to tread down our Enemies, we shall not return with Success and Victory. Here I will demonstrate the Truth of this Proposition from the Reason of the thing it self: And then I will shew what must be done on our part by way of Natural Consequence: And in both I will direct to the surest way of making our Armes Successful. The former of these I will make good from these four following Considerations.

I. A Main thing in an Army, in order to good Success is a Good General, a Valiant Commander and Leader. It was therefore said of old that an Army of Hares, that hath a Lion for their Leader is better than an Army of Lions with a

Tinnerous Hare for their Captain. \* A King or Chief Commander's Presence is of great Moment : And accordingly we read that the *Macedonians*, who had been formerly beaten, resolv'd to carry their Infant-King into the Field with them, and so they did, and his very Appearance inspired them with Valour, and they routed the Foe. Yea, the very Reliques of a dead Prince or Commander are of great Force, as appears from what is related of *Zisca's* Skin-Drum, and from what is said of our King *Edward* the First, that he bound his Son by Oath to take his Bones, after his Death, and carry them with him whenever he went to War with the *Scots*. Nay, the very Names of Great and Successful Commanders have struck Terror, as those of *Jeshua* and *Judas Maccabæus*, of *Hunniades* and *Scanderbeg*, of our *Talbot* in *France*, and *Duke D'Ava* in the Low Countries, of *EUGENE* and *MALBOROUGH* in our Days. Thus we see what mighty Power and influence goes along with a Renowned Commander or Leader. Now, we cannot but observe that in the Style and Language of Scripture *GOD* hath these very Appellations, to suggest to us that he is Successful, as well as Terrible in Battle, and that Victory must needs attend his Presence and Conduct. *GOD* was anciently acknowledg'd in the Thanksgivings of his People to be their Leader, as we see in that Triumphant Song of *Moses*, *Thou in thy Mercy hast led forth the People which thou hast Redeemed, thou hast guided them in thy strength*, *Ex. 15. 13.* And this is that which *GOD* graciously promis'd to his People, *The Lord will go before you*, *Isai. 52. 12.* And concerning the Messiah 'tis said, *I have given him for a Leader and Commander to the People*, *Isai. 55. 4.* There cannot but be Success where an Army is led on by such a Commander and Captain. If we can say with that King of *Judah*, † *Behold God himself is with us for our Captain*, We may promise ourselves that we shall, as that Prince did, vanquish the Enemies we fight against. The Infinite Power, the All-searching Wisdom, and the Inexhaustible Goodness of *GOD* are all engaged on our behalf, so that it is impossible we should miscarry. Our Conductor our Captain hath not the faults of a *Fabius*, or an *Hanibal*; he is neither too Slow, nor too Hasty. Tho' we are weak and feeble, yet he is the Almighty *GOD* : Tho' we are ignorant and unskilful, yet he is Omniscient; and tho' our Guilt renders us Obnoxious, yet his Immense Love and Kindness will make

\* *Multum interest ut Rex in pralio presens sit.* Liv. † 2 Chron. 13. 12.

him Propitious to us. Wherefore if he will vouchsafe to be our *Leader and Guide*, we shall march securely, we shall fight prosperously, and we shall come off with Conquest.

II. The next grand Thing which is requisite to Success and Victory in an Army, is that *the Soldiers be Men of Valour and Resolution*, that they engage with great Briskness and Vigour, and hold out with unwearied Courage to the End. Now, it is God's Presence and Assistance that must effect this. He alone can put Mettle and Spirit, Valour and Courage into the Hearts of Men, as he did into those of *David's Worthies*, and all those excellent Champions in the *Jewish Wars*, and those Brave and Heroic Persons you read of in the Eleventh Chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, *who subdued kingdoms, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness became strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens*. This was all by the Divine help, which at this Day is able to effect the same. Trumpets and Drums were invented, and are made use of in Battle to raise up Mens Courage, which yet very often they are not able to do. But when *the Lord God shall blow the Trumpet*, as he is \* said to do, it never proves a vain Noise, an Empty Sound, but such a one as infuses real Courage and Magnanimity, and strikes Terror into the hearts of the Enemy. Captains were wont to make Speeches to their Soldiers to encourage them, and some we read have been very successful in it: but they were only able to propound such Arguments and Morives to them, as they thought would be most prevalent with Rational Men. It was the Almighty alone who effectually put Courage into their Hearts, and Powerfully stir'd them up to quit themselves like undaunted Warriors.

On the contrary, what Fear and Amazement, what sudden Consternation, what Dread and Cowardize have possess'd the minds of those whom GOD hath not stir'd up? An Example of this we have in the Inhabitants of *Jericho*, hearing of the approach of the Israelites: *their hearts melted within them, neither did there remain any more Courage in any Man because of them*, *Jos. 2. 11*. Hence it was that the Philistines were afraid and trembled when they were about to engage that People: *for God is come into the Camp*, said they, *1 Sam. 4. 7*. That was sufficient to terrify and appall even those great-brawny Fighters. But the very same thing gives Spirit and Valour to the Servants of the most High. They are so far from being Intimidated, that they take Courage because God is in the Camp.

\* *Isai. 18. 3. Zech. 9. 14.*

They are actuated and enervated by his Presence and Gracious Influences: and then 'tis no wonder that both their Hearts and Swords are Edg'd, and that the very Sight of the Enemy gives them Spirits, and that they prove Successful and Victorious.

Nor are we to think with \**Machiavel* that the *Christian Religion* breaks and crows Men's Spirits, and enfeebles the stout and magnanimous, and hinders them from undertaking great and glorious Things, and that since *Christ's* Time (as this Writer particularly suggests) there have been no such Courageous Soldiers as *Old Rome* bred up. Which he attempts to prove from this Topick, That Christianity directs us to a despising of this Life and all the Delights and Pleasures of it, and promises reward to Humility and Self-denial: whereas the *Heathens* valued their Lives at a high rate, and look'd upon Worldly Honour as their greatest Good, and thereupon were stir'd up to do greater and braver Things in the Face of the World than Christians have done. But any Man may see that this way of Arguing may be easily retorted upon him; for if Christians make less account of the World than *Pagans*, then they may fight the more Courageously, as not being affraid to lose their Lives. And then besides, they are sure of a better and never-ceasing Life hereafter, which even the wisest and most improved Heathens had little or no Knowledge of. The Christian Institution therefore cannot be justly thought or said to debase and enervate Mens Spirits, to Emasculate their Minds, for it is so far from doing this that it qualifies the sincere professors of it for worthy and Noble Undertakings, and animates them with Courage and True Valour. If Undaunted Suffering be a Token of Fortitude and Magnanimity, we are sure that *Christians*, of all Men in the World have given the highest and most remarkable Proofs of them. The Primitive Saints who suffer'd all sorts of Torments and Deaths under the Emperors of *New Rome*, gave such convincing demonstrations of True Valour as are not to be parallel'd with any Examples of *Old Rome's* Courage, which *Machiavel* so much applauds. Indeed, to speak freely the Christian Religion is so far from making Men Cowards, that no Man can be truly Valiant without it. For True Fortitude is founded in Piety: And no Man can on good grounds be Daring and Ventrours unless he be truly Religious. Yea, a Man professing Christianity, if he be Vicious, cannot (properly speaking) act Bravely, because it is not Valour, but Rashness and

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\* In Dec. Liv. l. 2. c. 3.

Unreasonable Audacity to venture his Life (which is requisite to a Consummate Bravery) when he knows that by the hazarding of that he endangers his Happiness, yea plunges himself into endless Misery. But on the contrary, a Good Man fights with confident Belief of his Future Blessedness, and knows that when he leaves this World, he shall be received into a far better. Though he pities the Folly of the mistaken *Turks* who are taught out of the *Alcoran* (which is their Bible) that all that die in their Wars go immediately to Paradise, yet This he is assured of upon infallible Grounds that if a Person heartily repents of his former Sins, and practises the contrary Virtues, and becomes a Good Man and a good Christian, if then he fights in a Good Cause and with a Good Conscience, and dies in defence of his Religion and his Country, his Death will certainly be an inlet to everlasting Glory and Bliss.

I appeal to any Man of unprejudiced Reason whether this be not a Truer and Solider Spring of Courage, and a more forcing Motive to look Death in the Face, than any that a Virious and Debauch'd Man is capable of: Who *Rushes like a Horse into the Battle*, falls on with a Brutish Valour, and stupidly throws away this Present Life of his, to be for ever Miserable in another. Can you call this *Valour*? No: If you give right Names to things, you cannot. But a Religious Man, a Vertuous Christian is made up of true Principles of Courage and Valour, he being always prepared to die, and having a Comfortable Expectation of a Blessed Immortality through the Meritorious Passion and Death of the Lord Jesus. An Army of such Men will prove Soldiers indeed; these, like that Great Famed Warrior, will scorn to steal a Victory; these will stand, and endure the Shock, whilst others seek their Safety in their Heels: In a word, these will be bless'd with Victory from God, because they had their Valour and Resolution from Him.

III. Another great thing in order to Victory is *Wisdom* and *Policy*, and Skill to obviate the Enemies *Councils*, and defeat his *Stratagems*. It was observ'd long since that \* the Vertue and Efficacy of Military Men consists in the wise Councils and Contrivances of their Leaders. War is to be manag'd by Wit and Skill as well as Force: for *Blunders* in War are dangerous and Fatal. Whence the Wise Pagans made the Goddess of War and *Wisdom* to be the same. Against our profess'd Enemies those Beasts of Prey, we may lawfully use the Trap and Net as well as more Destructive Weapons. The Wis-

\* *Ducis in consilio posita est virtus militum. Val. Max. Lib. 1.*

dom of the Serpent (to it be not of him who is stiled the Old Serpent) is commended by our Saviour himself. Honest Subtilty and Prudence are the Gift of God, and certainly they may be well employ'd in Martial Affairs. Thus we read how the Holy Warriors mention'd in the Bible \* made use sometimes of Feints, and Cunning Retreats and Counterfeit Flights, and secret Ambushes, and other Wily *Stratagems* of War.

Now, we are sure that the All-Wise God can furnish us with the best and most successful Maxims of Policy, and he can outwit and infatuate the Councils of *Achitophels*, and defeat all their deep-lay'd Projects. We have a plain and peremptory Text for this in *Isaiah 8. Associate yourselves, O ye People, and ye shall be broken in pieces: Take Counsel together, and it shall come to nought: speak the word, and it shall not stand, for God is with us.* Here we are assured that the Cabals and Counsels of those who study the Ruin of GOD's People, shall be rendred Ineffectual; and the Reason of it is annex'd, namely, because *God is with them*: GOD who is able to Countermine all the close and dark Contrivances, all the Crafty Machinations of their Adversaries. We cannot but expect that the Military Enterprizes of these latter will favour of all the Wit and Invention they are Masters of: But the All-knowing and Wise GOD, is able to sound and gauge their deepest Devices, to unravel their closest Designs, to unmask all their hidden Intrigues, to intangle them in their own Mazes, to disappoint and confound their most Concerted Policies and *Stratagems*. He that considers this, must needs conclude that those whom GOD appears for in their Warlike Undertakings, shall assuredly Prosper.

IV. Where GOD goeth, there is always an *Army* present, a Great and Innumerable *Host*. All the Creatures of the Universe stand ready to fight his Battles: And so it is no wonder that Victory and Conquest wait upon those who are on his side. First, there is the Glorious † *Host of Heaven* ever attending him, and which he can command at his pleasure. The Angels, who are call'd *the Army of Heaven and the Heavenly Host*, are his constant Attendants. These *Ministring Spirits*, as they are employ'd for the Service of the Saints, so they are sent to do Execution on the Wicked, and particularly on those Armed Forces which GOD designs to overthrow. Thus one single Angel in a Night struck dead

\* *Jos. 4. Eccl. Judg. 7. 16. Eccl. † 1 Kings 22. 19. Dan. 4. 35. Luke 2. 13.*

above a Hundred and Fourscore Thousand Men in the Host of the *Assyrians*. What havock and slaughter then could a whole Army of those Spirits have made? From what we read of the Angel *Michael* in *Dan.* 10. 13. it may be Collected that these Celestial Squadrons do aid and assist the Righteous, and fight for them, and that they are Commissioned to be Executioners of the Divine Vengeance on their Enemies. The same may be gather'd from *David's* Prayer against his Enemies in *Psal.* 35. 5, 6. *Let them be turned back and brought to confusion that devise my hurt; let them be as chaff before the Wind, and let the Angel of the Lord chase them. And again, let the Angel of the Lord Persecute them.* It is not to be question'd but that it is so at this Day: This Angelical Host is always ready to rally forth out of their Heavenly Mansions to take the part of those who are favour'd by GOD, and to appear in Battle against their Enemies: Upon which account the Servants of GOD are Blessed with Success in War.

Again, The Sun and Moon and other Planets and Stars are in the Style of Scripture call'd \* *the Host of Heaven*, and these likewise are sometimes Militant in behalf of those whose welfare is design'd by GOD. *Joshua*, the Famous General of the *Israelites*, gave the Word of Command to the Two Great Luminaries of Heaven, *Jos.* 10. 12. *Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, in thy furious March make a halt, that thou mayst afford us thy light as long as we are fighting in this place; and thou Moon in the valley of Ajalon, stop there, and bring not Night with thee, till we have conquer'd our Enemies here. And these Heavenly Bodies were presently obedient to the Command, as we read in the next Verse, The Sun stood still, and the Moon stay'd until the People had aveng'd themselves upon their Enemies.* And this was so Remarkable and Memorable an Occurrence that it was inserted into the Jewish Chronicles, *Is not this written in the Book of Jasher?* So the Sun stood still in the midst of Heaven and hastened not to go down about a whole day: And there was no day like that, for the Lord fought for Israel: He fought for them by Prolonging the Day to an unusual length, and this was effected by stopping the Course of the Sun, which implies that at other times it hath a Diurnal Motion: And besides, its standing still could not have been a Strange and Wonderful thing (as it is here represented) unless its general course was to Move. I think that is very plain. And if you say that this Arresting of the Sun was only a Seeming thing, and that properly speaking it was the Earth

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\* *Psal.* 33. 6.

that stood still, and not the Sun; by such an Interpretation as this you run into these two Absurdities: First, that the History of the Bible, when it plainly relates *matter of Fact*, and as plainly *repeats* it (as in the present Case) is not to be attended to; And Secondly, that *Miracles* (for of this nature the Sun's standing still is here supposed to be) may be *only Seeming*, and *not Real*. Till these two Difficulties fully be answered, (which I never yet saw done) one would be somewhat inclin'd to be of opinion that the Sun's Motion was *really* hindred and retarded in *Joshua's* time, to favour the Armies of the *Israelites*.

And tho' we are not to expect any such thing now, yet it is to be granted that this Glorious Luminary may by its favourable Influence and Aspect contribute in some measure toward Conquest. Yea, we read that by its Abundant Light it hath done this, thro' the direction of Divine Providence: Thus in the famous Battle at *Cressie* between the *French* and *English*, the defeat of the former might partly be ascrib'd to the Sun's shining so directly in their Faces in the time of the fight that their Eyes were dazled, and they could not see how to grapple with their Enemies. In the Inspired History we read that *The Stars fought from Heaven*, in their courses they fought against *Sisera*, *Judg. 5, 20*. Which they may be said to do by their proper and peculiar Aspects, and by producing such Motions as were serviceable towards the discomfiting of *Sisera's* Army. Accordingly \* the Jewish Historian on this Historical passage tells us that there was a great fall of *Rain* and *Hail* when the Battle was begun, and a great *Wind* arose which blew these in the Faces of the *Canaanites* and almost blinded them: Which was such a hindrance to them in their fighting that the *Israelites* got the Victory.

Which reminds me of mentioning further those *Noted Meteors* which by *GOD's* Providence have been made made use of in Battle, and are deservedly to be numbred amongst *GOD's* Host. Thus he fought for the *Israelites* by a strong *East-Wind* which drove the *Red-sea* back, and divided it into parts, *Ex. 14. 21*. *Psal. 136. 13*. Twelve Parts, say the *Jews* according to the number of the Tribes, that every particular Tribe might pass in a distinct path by itself. He fought against the Armies of the *Amorites* with an other sort of Artillery, *The Lord cast down great Stones from Heaven upon them, and they died: There were more that died with Hailstones than they whom the Children of*

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\* *Joseph. Antiq. lib. 5. cap. 6.*

*Israel slew with the Sword, Jos. 10. 11. He destroy'd the Host of the Philistines by thundring with a great thunder upon them, 1 Sam. 7. 10. And it is well known why that part of the Roman Army under the Emperor Aurelius, which consisted of Christians, was call'd the Thundring Legion. In that Stupendious Expedition of the Spaniards at Sea in Eighty Eight, the Winds and the Waves fought for us, and against our Proud Foe: Even by these they were made to know that their Great Armada did not merit that haughtry Title which they bestow'd upon it. And if we will be Impartial (as we ought to be) we must not be backward to own that the Almighty hath fought against Us lately by Violent Winds and Prodigious Storms and Tempests both at Land and Sea, and the dismal effects of it we feel at this very Day.*

But the Creatures which have *Life and Sense* (tho' never so weak and contemptible in themselves) are more especially *GOD's Host*, which he employs as Ministers of his Wrath and Vengeance: Thus *GOD* himself stileth the Locusts, the Canker-worm, the Caterpillar, and the Palmer-worm his *Great Army*, Joel 2. 25. For these little despicable Creatures made as great a Ravage and Spoil in the Land whither they were sent, as if some Mighty Army had invaded it: Of which you have a lively description in that Second Chapter of *Joel*. Before this we read of other Armies of the like sort, as of *Flies* and other Insects which *GOD* sent against the *Egyptians* to plague and torment them. *GOD* promised his People the *Israelites* that he would make way for them into *Canaan* by sending *Hornets*, which should as it were Dagoon the Inhabitants, and expel them thence, Ex. 23. 28. and we find it accomplish'd in *Jos. 24. 12.* In time of War there have been Sieges rais'd by the violence of these and the like Stinging Animals: Thus we read in \* *Theodore*t that upon the Prayers of a Good Man an Army of the *Persians* was repuls'd from the Walls of a Town which they had invested, merely by the multitude of these Creatures. Other Sieges have been broken up by great swarms of Bees, as † *Oforius* and ‖ *Camerarius* relate.

Thus *GOD* is the Lord of Hosts, as he is stiled a hundred times in the Holy Scriptures: And you see what are those Hosts and Armies which he is Lord of, and what is that vast Train of Artillery that goes along with them. We may justly say with that Good Man, *Job 25. 3. Is there any number of his Armies?* There is an Innumerable Company of Angels, a

\* *Hist. Eccl. 2. c. 30.* † *De reb. Afric. l. 8.* ‖ *Hor. Subcis. Cent. 1*  
Multitude

Multitude of Celestial Bodies, and vast Throng of Creatures both Animate and Inanimate in the lower World, who in respect of their *Order*, and their *Obedience* to the Divine Command are fitly call'd *GOD's Host*, and are all ready at a Word to execute his will and pleasure. If we be careful to obey *GOD's Laws*, all these Forces fight for us, these Auxiliaries of Heaven are on our side. But if we wilfully transgress, this formidable Host shall be engag'd against us.

Thus on several Accounts we see the Proposition made good, that it is the Presence and Assistance of *GOD*, that makes our Armies prosperous and successful. Then that of the Prophet *Jeremiah* may be truly said, *They shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee, for I am with thee, saith the Lord*, Jer. 1. 19. And He being with us, we may truly pronounce what *Elisha* said to his Servant, *they that be with us are more than they that be with them*. All the Creatures above and below fight for us; yea, when *GOD* is with us, our very Enemies shall be on our side. Of which we have an Instance in 2 Chron. 20. 23. *The Children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir, utterly to slay and destroy them: And when they had made an end of the inhabitants of Seir, every one helped to destroy another*. It is not to be marvell'd at, that *Jehosaphat* and his People had the better of their Enemies, when they destroy'd one another, and fell by Mutual Wounds among themselves. This and all that I have said before is the happy fruit and consequence of *GOD's* being Present with us in Battle. *Thro' him we shall do valiantly: It is He that shall tread down our Enemies*.

Wherefore in the first place let us be very apprehensive of this Great and Important Truth: Let us have a deep reverence of *GOD's* presiding in War. Men are not so affected with this as they ought. Their general practice bears Witness to this: For in this present Posture of Affairs, when we with other Nations are so greatly concern'd in Martial Undertakings, how few are there that have any impressions of This Doctrine (which I have been treating of) on their Minds? We talk of Fighting, and wish well to our Allies, and we are willing to support the War with our Purses. We would persuade ourselves that our Men and Money will not miscarry, and we hope to see a good end of these Boisterous Times. But where are the Men that own *GOD* to be the Great Disposer and Moderator of these Wars? In whose Mouths do you hear this acknowledg'd, that he Presides over all Martial Affairs? Who among us speaks the Language of  
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my Text, *Through God we shall do valiantly. He it is that shall tread down our Enemies.* We are forward to boast of our own strength and valour, but we forget that these are vain and useless without the Presence and Aid of the Almighty. This is a great and inexcusable fault, and I am afraid we have fared the worse for it.

Let me intreat you therefore to correct this gross miscarriage for the future, and in your Words and behaviour to make an open recognition of this Grand Maxim, that GOD is the Lord of Hosts, that all our Success in War depends upon his good pleasure, and that our Forces can never return Victorious, and bring Peace with them without his particular Concurrence and Blessing. Urge this necessary Doctrine upon your Minds and Consciences; and let me tell you, You can never do it more seasonably than Now. Assure your selves and others that GOD's Providence is eminently and visibly seen in the managing of War: He is the Great Moderator of Arms, the Conductor of Forces, and he only can give Success in Battle. Hence it was that under the *Mosaic Law* the *Priests*, the Immediate Ministers of GOD, were particularly concern'd in the Wars, and commanded to attend upon them, *Numb. 10. 9.* And one certain Priest was chosen out from the rest, and appointed on purpose to blow the Warlike Trumpet, to Sound an Alarm, and to make a Pathetick Exhortation to the Soldiers (the heads of which you have in *Deut. 20. 2.*) to stir them up to fight with the utmost courage and vigour. This Priest was call'd by the *Jews* (as a Learned Jew tells us) \* *the Military Messiah*, the Person Anointed, i. e. Set apart for the War. Which plainly shews that the Campaign was open'd and began with Religion, that GOD Himself is concern'd in Battle, and that he is the Great Governor of War; otherwise he would not have commanded his Priest to officiate on so rough an occasion. And this appears likewise from the devoting of Weapons of War to GOD, and dedicating the Spoils to his Honour: Thus we read that *David* laid up *Goliath's* Sword in the Tabernacle, as a Trophy of Victory gain'd by the Divine assistance. And in the Apocryphal Writings we read that all the Stuff of *Holofernes's* Tent was dedicated by *Judith* (that Warlike Woman) as a Gift unto the Lord. Yea, that this was the practice of the Pagans also, is evident from what we find recorded concerning the Philistines, viz. that \* they deposi-

\* מִשְׁחָה לַמִּלְחָמָה *Ad bellum unctus.* Maimonid. in *Chele Mikdash.* † 1 Sam. 5. 2.

sited the Ark (which they had taken in Battle) in the Temple of Dagon, and that afterwards upon defeating the Israelitish Army, \* they hung up the Arms of King Saul in the Temple of Ashtaroth; thereby acknowledging that their Gods were the Givers of Victory. And I remember Xenophon relates in the Life of Cyrus (that Famous Warrior) that *ὁ θεὸς* was one of his Military Watchwords among his Soldiers in the Camp, to acquaint them that GOD was interested in their Martial Enterprizes; and that unless He fought with or for them, they could not expect to be Victorious. And in the same place 'tis there added that † *It is not multitude nor Force in any Army, but GOD that gives the Victory.*

And this appears plainly from matter of Fact; for the Almighty hath strangely interposed in Battles, and by his Overruling Power and Wisdom the Great Councils of VVar have been baffled, and the Mighty Captains have been defeated, and vast Armies have been destroy'd by Unaccountable Accidents (I call them so in respect of us) a Numerous and Puissant Host hath been scatter'd by Unlook'd for Occurrences. A Learned Man of our Church will furnish you with plenty of Notable Instances of this sort, in his *Second Volume* on the Creed Book the 6th, where that Judicious VWriter gives us a relation of several Modern Battles, wherein GOD's Presiding in VVar hath been very visible and remarkable. He recounts several Unusual Events that have happen'd, and disappointed the Force of Great Armies: He shews how Victory hath strangely enclined to a side in an unlikely manner. We ourselves have heard that the unexpected Throw of a Bomb gain'd the day in one Campaign, and lost it in another, and so decided the controversy between two Struggling Armies. Let us then Religiously subscribe to this Truth, that God is the Supreme Disposer of Martial Counsels and Exploits, and let us look for Success from his Presidency and Influence over them.

In the Second Place, as we desire a Blessing on our Land and Naval Forces, as we wish they may be Successful and Victorious, let it be our chief care and endeavour that GOD, who is the Great Over-Ruler and manager of VVar (as you have heard) may be present with them, and go forth with them to Battle. *Vain is the help of Man, vain are all our Armed Forces without his Powerful Assistance.* We are about this time by the Providence of GOD preparing to meet an

\* 1 S. m. 21. 10. † *Ὁ θεὸς ὁ πᾶσι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐν τῇ μάχῃ τῇ νίκῃ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις, ἀδελφὲς ὅτι. Instit. Cyri. lib. 3.*

Implacable and Bloody Enemy in the Field and on the VVaters: That we may do it with Success, we must be chiefly solicitous that GOD would vouchsafe us his Presence: For this is the surest way to return in Triumph. Choose GOD for your Captain and Conduct, who alone is able to inspire you with Courage and Valour. My Brethren, this which I have said, concerns you all. Every one of you must be doing something in this Troublesom and Perillous Time. You must act what you can towards the forwarding the Success of our Military undertakings. And if you ask, *What* is to be done, the Answer to this VVeighy Query is in these four Particulars.

I. If you would have GOD to go out with your Armies, and thereby have a period put to the Dangerous Wars, obtain it by earnest and constant Prayer, by pouring out your Desires and Supplications before him. Whilest *Joshua* was fighting in the Valley, *Moses* was lifting up his Hands in Prayer on the Hills, by the same token that whilst he did so, the Host of *Israel* prevail'd against *Amalek*. Whilst *Samuel* cried unto the Lord for *Israel*, the *Philistines* were subdned, 1 *Sam.* 7. 9. &c. This was King *Asa's* practice when he was going to give Battle to his Enemies, 2 *Cbron.* 14. 11. and it proved succesful. So you read that *Jehosaphat* pray'd his Foes dead upon the spot, 2 *Cbron.* 20. 5, 24. And *Hezekiab* by earnest Prayer fetch'd down an Angel to destroy the *Assyrians* who were coming against him, 2 *Kings* 19. 15, 35. And as this was the practice of the *Jews*, so it was no less of the *Christian Churches* in all Ages since they were founded: They ventur'd not to fight, unless they first invoked the Aid of the Almighty. We are inform'd by *Tertullian* that the Primitive Christians supplicated Heaven that the *Emperors* might, among other Blessings, have \* Strong and Valiant Armies. We continually beseech GOD, saith † *Cyprian*, and pour out our Prayers to him that our Enemies may be defeated. And another of the Antients tells us that the Christians pray'd for || Mercy and pardon for those who fought for them. For this purpose Solemn Times of Publick Praying and Fasting have been set apart by the Rules of the Church, and every one in private hath thought it his duty to cry mightily unto GOD for his Aid and Assistance.

\* *Precantes semper sumus pro omnibus Imperatoribus exercitus fortes.* Apolog. cap. 30. † *Pro arcendis hostibus rogamus semper & preces sumdimus.* Epist. ad Demetrian. || *Summus oratur deus, & venia postulatur exercitibus.* Arnob. lib. 4.

The Reason is because GOD is the GOD of Battle, and the Lord of Hosts: And Deliverance and Victory are from him alone. On this ground we are oblig'd to look up unto the most High, and to implore his direction, aid and assistance in time of War. *When I cry unto thee, saith the Psalmist, then shall mine enemies turn back: This I know, for GOD is for me, Psal. 56. 9.* GOD will certainly take our part, if we call upon him in sincerity, and lift up pure Hands unto him. Betake your selves then at this time to your proper Duty, that is, be very earnest in your Prayers and Supplications unto GOD: Beg of him that he would be pleas'd to go forth with our Armies and our Navies, that he would *teach their Hands to war, and their fingers to fight*, that he would *gird them with strength unto the Battle, and subdue uncer them those that rise against them.* Prayers are our best Forces and Weapons (and so they were \* antiently stiled) in time of War. As long as the direful sound of the Warlike Trumpet is heard, as long as the Bloody Sword is unsheath'd among us, we are concern'd to make use of these: We must pray Day and Night for a Blessing on the Enterprizes of those who are sent to fight for us.

II. If you are really desirous to have GOD, the Lord of Hosts to go forth with your Armies, do not place your Confidence in them, rely not on *the Arm of flesh.* This is that which hath undone many a hopeful Band of Men, namely, their Vain Confidence and Presumption, their Trusting in their Number and Power, and Despising their Enemies that came against them. This blasted the mighty Host of the Philistines: They look'd and spoke Big, they insultingly vaunted their Great Champion, and he with a most unsufferable insolence defied the Armies of the Living GOD: And therefore the Incensed Majesty of Heaven made it the just recompense of their Insulting that a poor feeble Stripling should baffle that Unwieldy Giant, and put their whole Army to flight. It was this that overthrew the vast Assyrian Forces which came against the Jews, especially those in King Hezekiah's time. When Sennacherib boasted against the Lord and his People that † *He was come up with the multitude of his Chariots to the height of the Mountains, to the sides of Lebanon, and that he would cut down the tall Cedars thereof, and the choise Firs thereof, and enter into the lodgings of his borders, and into the Forest of his Carmel, when he gloried that he had*

\* *Hec Vis Deo grata est. Tertull. Apol. cap. 39. μήα γὰρ ὄπλον ὡς.*  
 Chrysost. Hom. 5, de Incomprehens. Dei naturâ. † 2 Kings 19. 23. *Exc.*

digged, and drunk strange waters, and with the sole of his Feet had dried up all the Rivers of besieged places, then presently you hear the Doom of this Daring Warrior from the Mouth of the most High, † I will put my Hook into thy Nose, and my bridle in thy Lips, and I will turn thee back by the way which thou camest: And accordingly you read that an Executioner from Heaven was dispatch'd to destroy the great Insulting Host: and he effectually did it in one Night.

In Prophane Story *Xerxes*, the Famous *Persian* Monarch, seems to be this Proud and Vaunting Man's Parallel: We are told that he came into *Greece* with an Army that consisted of above a Million of fighting Men, the greatest that ever was heard or read of, and his Boasting was proportionable to those Numbers: He challeng'd or threatned every thing all the way he went, and 'tis said he sent a Chartel of Defiance to the Mount *Athos*. And at Sea as well as on the Land he proclaim'd his excessive Confidence and Pride, for he pretended to fetter the *Hellepont*, and caus'd the Waves to be whipt and chastised, to teach them to do obeisance to Him and none else. What did not this Arrogant Prince promise himself, who had such a Vast Army at his command? But how short did he and they fall of what they expected, and of what they boasted of? In a little time this unheard of Multitude of Armed Men was scatter'd and defeated by a handful of *Grecians*, and he himself was put to his shifts, and glad to make his escape in a poor Fisher-boat.

I might descend to latter times and remind you of the *Spanish* Bravado's in Eighty Eight: No Men were more sure, in their own opinion, of Success and Victory, and none discover'd it more by their immoderate Boastings: But we have cause to remember with Thankfulness that their Great and Formidable Navy, and all their Warlike Provisions and Preparations, in which they so much Trusted, prov'd Ineffectual, in stead of being, as they vainly brag'd, *Invincible*. And did not the *French* experience something of this nature the last Campaign but one in the *Netherlands*, when it was observ'd that they came out of their Lines, and provoked the Confederates to fight, contrary to their wonted practice, and likewise appear'd before *Barcelona* and *Turin* with an Elation of Mind unbecoming Mortal Creatures, and vauntingly express'd their Assurance of Victory in the foresaid places? And have We nothing to answer for of this kind? Did not our extraordinary Success and the ill Turn of the Enemies Affairs puff

us up, and at the same time make us Remiss and Careless, and cause us to desist from our former Vigilancy and Application? So that this seems to be a natural Cause of our Disappointments and Losses afterwards: Besides that we were Judiciously punish'd by GOD for our Excessive Confidence and Security.

If we hope then to succeed for the future, let us not rest on our own Strength, let us not be presumptuously Confident of the Number or Gallantry of our Soldiers, who are employ'd in the service of their Country. I find it to be a Military Maxim, That we are not to despise and think too meanly of our Enemy. I apply it now in a Theological way: Boast not of your Armies or your Fleet, Trust not in your Martial Provisions. I am afraid we are still guilty of this Boasting too much. We know the *English* Valour, and what part of the World doth not know it? *Julius Caesar*, who first attempted to invade this Nation, had Experience of it, and fled from the *British* Shoar faster than he came towards it. It was two Hundred Years (namely from that Emperor to *Domitian*) before the *Romans* were able to vanquish this whole Island. The best Writers applaud the *British* Valour, and freely own that the *Britains* were not inferior to the *Romans*, nor *Cassibelan* or even *Boadicia* (a Woman) to *Caesar*. And ever since, Valour seems to be entailed on this Nation, and we inherit it from our Ancestors. But that which I request of you is this, that you would own it and mention it in a due and decent way, and as becomes good Christian Men. Learn to renounce all Dependance and Reliance on your Prowess, or any Humane Power and Strength whatsoever, according to that of the Psalmist, *I will not trust in my Bow, neither shall my Sword save me*, Psal. 44. 6. And in an other place he gives the Reason of this, *There is no King, saith he, saved by the multitude of an Host: A mighty Man is not delivered by much strength. A Horse is a vain thing for safety: Neither shall he deliver any by his great strength*, Psal. 33. 16, 17. Boast not then of your Military Forces: Be not so foolish, as well as prophane, to Trust and Rely on these, Lest you deservedly feel the effect of that Execration, *Cursed is he that maketh Flesh his Arm*.

III. As you must not confide in Men or any Worldly and Fleshly aid, so, on the other side, that you may be Blessed with Success, you ought to trust and Rely on GOD. With the use of Lawful means you must ever joyn Faith in GOD's Providence, in his Power, Goodness and Wisdom, and all his

other Attributes. \* *The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon* must go together. GOD helps by the Hand of Man: And therefore this latter ought not to be neglected, yea it must carefully be made use of. But it is the former which we must trust to and depend upon. That is our Main Stay and Support in the Day of Battle. Having then beg'd the Divine Blessing (which was the first thing I directed you to) and having renounced all Confidence in your selves (which was the second) it remains now that you trust wholly in the Divine Help and Assistance, that you devolve the whole event and issue on GOD's Providence. *David* told that Monstrous Giant of *Gath*, that *he came unto him in the name of the Lord of Hosts*: That was his Armour of proof, and with that he became a Conqueror. If we at this time put on the same Armour, we shall be as Successful. If we go forth in the Name of the Lord of Hosts, and place our affiance and confidence in him, these *Philistines* whom we encounter shall be delivered as a Prey into our Hands.

You may satisfy your selves from *2 Chron. 13. 18.* that Faith and Reliance on GOD procure Victory, and that the contrary carries Defeat with it: *The Children of Israel were brought under at that time, and the Children of Judah prevailed, because they relied upon the Lord God of their Fathers.* This Reliance is assign'd here as the Cause of the Good Success of the latter, and the Want of it is given as the reason why the former succeeded not. To this purpose let us observe the Admirable Prayer of King *Asa*, when a vast Army of the *Ethiopians* came out against him, and had set the Battle in array against him, *2 Chron. 14. 11.* *Help us, O Lord our God, for we Rest on thee, and in Thy Name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou art God, let not Men prevail against Thee.* This was the language of Faith: Here was an Entire Trusting on GOD: And Success soon follow'd it, as you read in that Chapter. But observe the Contrary in the same Persons afterwards, *2 Chron. 16. 7, 8.* where you find that a Prophet was sent by GOD to King *Asa* with this plain Message, *Because thou hast relied on the King of Syria, and not relied on the Lord thy God, therefore the Host of the King of Syria escaped out of thy hand.* And then referring to what was the behaviour of King *Asa*, before, he adds, *Were not the Ethiopians and the Lubims a huge Host, with very many Chariots and Horsemen? Yet because thou didst rely on the Lord, he delivered them into thy hand.* You see what Affiance and Trust in GOD did, and what the Contrary procured.

From the several Instances you may make the *Psalmist's* Inference, *It is better to trust in the Lord then to put confidence in Man; it is better to trust in the Lord then to put confidence in Princes*, *Psalm*. 118. 8, 9. It is more safe and advantageous for us to rely on *G O D* than on any Humane help whatsoever. The Eleventh Chapter of the *Epistle to the Hebrews* sets forth the Wonderful Effects of this Faith, and particularly as to Martial Attempts. *By Faith the Walls of Jericho* (Besieged by the People of *G O D*) *fell down*, v. 30. Faith was their best Engine of Battery. *Thro' Faith the holy Warriors of old subdued Kingdoms; waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the Armies of the Aliens*, v. 33, 34.

Let us then exert our Faith in a more signal manner at this time. And to excite and encourage it, let us place in our view *G O D's* former Kindnesses and Favours to us, as Pledges of future ones. Let us reflect on what he hath done for this Nation heretofore, how he hath shew'd himself the Lord of Hosts; and let this cherish and fortify our Faith. *The Lord that delivered us out of the paw of the Lion, and out of the paw of the Bear, will deliver us out of the Hand of the Philistine; that Uncircumcised Philistine, who hath violently and barbarously chas'd the poor Protestants out of his Dominions, and now seeks to destroy all of that Name thro' out the World, But our help is in the Name of the Lord, who made Heaven and Earth: His Name is a strong Tower; we will run into it, and be safe.* We will comfort and encourage ourselves as *Philo* did his Country-men after his return from *Rome*, where he had been evilly entreated by the Emperor *Caligula*, to whom he was sent on an Embassy in their behalf, \* *Be of good cheer, Brethren*, said he, *for now seeing Caius is angry with us, God will be for us and against him.* When the most Powerful Enemies conspire against us, and shew their fury against us, then the most High will be our Defender and Deliverer: We must place the Last Resort of all here. Only forget not this, that Faith and Confidence must always be attended with a suitable Practice. *Trust in the Lord, and do good:* But if you separate this latter from the former, you cannot reasonably expect any good Success. Wherefore,

IV. And lastly, If you would have *G O D* to be with you, to bless your Forces and Armies in time of War, then do you be with him. This Inference I ground upon *2 Chron.* 15. 2. *G O D* had prospered King *Asa* and his Armies, and sent them

\* *Joseph. Antiqu. l. 18. c. 10.*

back Victorious: Whereupon the Prophet *Azariah* met him, and said, *Hear ye me, Aſa, and all Judah and Benjamin: The Lord is with you while ye be with him.* As much as to ſay, **G O D** will be preſent with your Forces when they go out to Battle, if you and they comply with his Laws, and conform your Lives to them; if you be careful not only to ſeek him by Prayer, and to cleave to him by Faith, but to turn from your wicked ways, and ſet yourſelves to ſerve **G O D** and obey his Precepts; then you ſhall find him to be a Preſent help in time of trouble, you ſhall fight your Foes with Honour and good Succeſs, and no weapon formed againſt you ſhall prosper. If you would have **G O D** to be your Commander and Captain at the head of your Armies, remember to make him your Leader and Guide in your Lives. Be ruled and govern'd by him, liſten to his Laws, do what he commands you. Know this, that he will be no Leader to them who fight under Satan's Banner, who are led by their Luſts and wicked inclinations. In *Joſhua's* Exhortation to the People of *Iſrael* it is observable that when he had acquainted them that *it was the Lord their God that fought for them*, He immediately adds, *Take good heed therefore unto your ſelves that ye love the Lord your God. Elſe if ye do in any wiſe go back, know for a certainty that the Lord your God will no more drive out any of the Nations from before you,* Joſ. 23 10. &c.

My Exhortation unto you this Day is the ſame. It is **G O D** that muſt fight for you, therefore fight not againſt him either in your Hearts or Lives. Go not back in your Love of **G O D** and his ways: Diſpleaſe him not by your wicked and vicious Lives, for if you do ſo, you may expect to feel his Hand very ſevere upon you. After the expenſe of ſo much Blood and Treafure, after your Conqueſts in the Field, after your *T E D E U M's* and Thankſgiving in your Churches, after your Triumphs and Proceſſions in your Streets, after the Trophies hung in your Halls, your Enemies ſhall aſreſh break in upon you like a reſiſtleſs Hurricane. Let me then intreat you to be very careful of your Carriage and Deportment; do not provoke the **G O D** of Heaven at the very inſtant when you are expecting Mercies from him, and looking to hear good tidings from abroad. Do not flatter your ſelves that **G O D** will Bleſs your Forces at Sea and in Foreign parts whiſt you have the impudence to act Irreligiouſly and Prophaneſy at home at the ſame time. Let us not deceive our ſelves: Victory belongs only to the Good; which perhaps is intimated to us in the Holy Tongue, where the ſame

Word

\* Word signifies to be Innocent and to Overcome. Purity and Innocency; and particularly in those that are engag'd in War; are Great Advantages. To which purpose I have met with an Excellent passage in *Cyrus's Life*, well worth our observnig, † "He made account, saith the Historian "that the Religion and Piety of his Soldiers would prove "advantageous to Him (as well as to them) and accordingly "approv'd of the resolution of those of them, who out of "reason and Judgment chose rather to commit themselves to "Sea, and to sail in the Company of such who they knew "were Religious, than of those who were suspected to be "Men of Impious designs and practices. This Great Man of Arms was rightly perswaded that Religion is to be look'd after in the first place both by Commanders and Soldiers, and to be reckon'd by them as their best Preservative, and their greatest Safety.

And it is true that it ought to be minded by every one of us, for we are all concern'd in the Affairs and Issues of War: And we are to remember that These depend on our *Good Behaviour*: To which GOD and our own Consciences know we can make but little pretence: Yea, we have behaved our selves like a most Profligate Race of Men. Admit that those who lately set up for *Prophets* among us were *Enthusiastick Impostors*, yet 'tis certain that we may look for some *Extraordinary Messengers*, Commission'd from Heaven, to rouse and terrify us, and denounce Judgments against the City and Nation: And even those foresaid Persons are so far *True Prophets* as they say no other than what we may justly expect will come to pass, Fire, Sword, Blood and Ruin, as the reward of that Debauchery and Prophaness, that Infidelity and Atheism, that Blasphemy, Sodomy, and other horrid Exorbitances which are found among us. Wherefore let us make good use of these late *Prophetick Pretensions*, and be reminded and warned thereby to take care how to escape the Wrath of the Almighty, and to secure the Interest of our Holy Religion, and the Common Safety and Welfare. Let us all unanimously agree to Reform whatever is amiss in our Lives, and seriously to addict our selves to Religion and Godliness. Let our Rulers in Church and State, our Nobles, our Gentry, our Clergy, our Preachers, our Divines, our Men of Business and Traffick, our Military Men, our Mariners, together with the whole Body of the Kingdom, strive who shall most adorn the Doctrine of GOD our Saviour in all things, who shall most

\* *Zachab*, † *Xenoph. Instit. Cyr. lib. 8.*

Faithfully and Zealously assert the Cause of Religion, and commend it to the World by a Holy and Exemplary Life; in this Atheistical and Prophane Generation.

To shut up all, Let us take unto us the whole Armour of God (as the Apostle advises us) having our loins girt about with Truth, and having on the Breast-plate of Righteousness, and our Feet Shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace: Above all, taking the Shield of Faith, and putting on the Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God; Praying always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all Perseverance. Being thus equip'd and appointed, we may look our Enemies in the Face, and on good Ground hope that GOD will prosper our Military undertakings, and make us a Successful, Victorious and Triumphant People, and bless us with an Honourable and Lasting Peace. Which GOD in his infinite Mercy vouchsafe for the Merits and Mediation of Christ Jesus our Lord, to whom be given all Honour and Glory to Eternal Ages. *Amen.*

F I N I S.



*Just Published.*

**T**HE Doctrine of Faith and Justification set in a True Light; in Three Parts: First of the Nature of Faith, Considered in its 1<sup>st</sup>. Essential Parts. 2<sup>dly</sup>. Opposites. 3<sup>dly</sup>. Effects. Secondly, Of Justification by Faith alone, where is amply defended the late Exploded Doctrine of the Imputation of our Sins to Christ; and of his Righteousness to us. Thirdly, Of the way how to Reconcile the two Apostles about the Doctrine of Justification. Being the 2<sup>d</sup>. Part of the Theological Treasures, which are to Compose a large Body of Christian Divinity. By John Edwards, D.D.